

REMARKS

In response to the final Office Action dated March 1, 2012, the Assignee respectfully requests continued examination and reconsideration based on the above amendments and on the following remarks.

Claims 1, 5-14, 36, 39-46, and 52 are pending in this application. Claims 2-4, 15-35, 37-38, and 47-51 were previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Rejection of Claims under § 103 (a)

The Office again rejected claims 1, 5-14, 36, 39-46, and 52 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent 6,005,861 to Humpleman in view of U.S. Patent 6,493,875 to Eames, *et al.*, in view of U.S. Patent 6,732,366 to Russo, and further in view of U.S. Patent 4,890,168 to Inoue, *et al.*

This rejection has been rendered moot by amendment. These claims have been amended to recite, or to incorporate, features that are not disclosed or suggested by *Humpleman*, *Eames*, *Russo*, and *Inoue*. Independent claim 1, for example, has been amended to recite “*a data switch connected to the multiple pairs of a tuner and a demodulator, the data switch having multiple input ports with each pair of the multiple pairs of tuner and demodulator connected to a respective dedicated one of the multiple input ports, such that each pair of the multiple pairs of tuner and demodulator is dedicated to a different input port of the data switch, the data switch also having an input port connected to the network bus that receives the superimposed signal and that sends the superimposed signal to an output switch port*” (emphasis added). Support may be found at least in page 16, lines 7-11.

At least these features distinguish over *Humpleman*, *Eames*, *Russo*, and *Inoue*. The proposed combination of *Humpleman*, *Eames*, *Russo*, and *Inoue* describes a set-top box that separates network interface units from internal electronics. Still, though, *Humpleman*, *Eames*,

Russo, and Inoue fails to teach or suggest “a data switch ... having multiple input ports with each pair of the multiple pairs of tuner and demodulator connected to a respective dedicated one of the multiple input ports.” Additionally, the proposed combination of Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue also fails to teach or suggest “each pair of the multiple pairs of tuner and demodulator is dedicated to a different input port of the data switch.” Moreover, the proposed combination of Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue further fails to teach or suggest “the data switch also having an input port connected to the network bus that receives the superimposed signal and that sends the superimposed signal to an output switch port.” For this reason, then, independent claim 1 must distinguish over Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue.

Independent claim 36 also distinguishes over *Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue*. Independent claim 36 has been amended to recite “*dedicating each input port of multiple input ports in a data switch to a different pair of the multiple pairs of the tuner and demodulator, such that each pair of the multiple pairs of tuner and demodulator is dedicated to a different input port of the data switch.*” Support may be found at least in page 16, lines 7-11. Because *Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue* fails to teach all these features, independent claim 36 cannot be obvious.

Independent claim 52 also distinguishes over *Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue*. Independent claim 52 has been amended to recite “*a data switch in the gateway having multiple input ports, with each pair of the multiple pairs of the tuner and demodulator connected to a respective dedicated one of the multiple input ports, such that each pair of the multiple pairs of the tuner and demodulator is dedicated to a different input port of the data switch, the data switch also having another input port connected to the network bus to output the decrypted digital information, the digital information, and the superimposed signal to an output port.*” Support may be found at least in page 16, lines 7-11. Because *Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue* fails to teach all these features, independent claim 52 cannot be obvious.

Claims 1, 5-14, 36, 39-46, and 52, then, cannot be obvious over *Humpleman, Eames, Russo, and Inoue*. The independent claims recite many distinguishing features, and the

respective dependent claims incorporate these distinguishing features and recite even more features. One of ordinary skill in the art, then, would not think that these claims are obvious. The Office is respectfully requested to remove the § 103 (a) rejection of these claims.

If any questions arise, the Examiner is invited contact the undersigned at (919) 469-2629 or scott@scottzimmerman.com.

37 C.F.R. § 1.8 CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being electronically transmitted via the USPTO EFS web interface on May 25, 2012.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott P. Zimmerman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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